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ABSTRACT

This is a compilation of five brief commentaries on Federal educational policy as it relates to Asian and Pacific Americans. In the first, former Congresswoman Patsy Takemoto Mink stresses the importance of organized political action in overcoming problems related to discrimination and economic and educational disadvantages. In the second paper, an overview of education in American Samoa is presented by Fofa I.F. Sunia, a delegate to the United States Congress. The third paper, by Allan L. Seid, a member of the California State Board of Education, reviews educational influences of social change and growing cultural and ethnic pride in the educational process for Asian Americans. In the fourth paper, the Deputy Director of the National Institute of Education, Gladys Chang Keith Hardy, discusses the effects of educational research on the formation of Federal educational policy. The fifth paper of the collection is by Congressman Norman Y. Mineta, and concerns the current political climate in Washington, D.C., how it will affect programs related to Asian and Pacific Americans, and how this group can influence future programs and policies. (GC)

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**FIVE ASIAN AND PACIFIC AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES
ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY**

The Comments of Patsy Takemoto Mink, Fofo I.F. Sunia,
Allan L. Seid, Gladys Chang Keith Hardy, and Norman Y.
Mineta Delivered at the April 1980 Conference of the
National Association for Asian and Pacific American
Education Held in Washington, D.C.

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THE MEANING OF POLITICS

Patsy Takemoto Mink
Former U.S. Congresswoman, Lecturer,
and Consultant

What brings me to this conference is the future and our role together in the future, the extremely challenging and very exciting prospects for the 1980's. Regardless of what platforms may have brought each of us to this conference, we do share a very significant responsibility for the future. I think that sometimes our collective efforts disappear once we depart from our conference environment. We forget that at the conference we are being given a huge array of challenges that will only be reiterated at the next conference unless each of us takes the messages that have been carefully prepared for us during these several days and begins to work systematically towards their achievement.

My principal area of activity in American life today is politics. I am given to believe that you are interested in politics. I am given to believe that you are interested in clout if not in politics. I am given to believe that you are interested in discussing working strategies that can give Asian Pacific peoples in this country not only greater economic opportunities, not only greater social and economic recognition, but also political status that will enable you to achieve not only your own individual agendas but also the collective community interests of all Asian Pacific peoples. That is a very tall order.

The 1970 federal census indicated that there were but 1.5 million Asians in this country; the forecast for 1980 is about double that number, about 3 million. We have seen very large

increases in several categories over the last 10 years. In 1970 for instance, 435,000 persons were of Chinese ancestry, 343,000 were Filipinos, 591,000 were Japanese, 70,000 were Koreans, and more than 200,000 were Southeast Asians. The current projections for 1980 indicate that the Chinese figures are now more than 800,000. The Filipino figures are probably over 800,000; the Japanese figures are about 750,000; the Korean population is estimated to be almost 400,000; and Southeast Asians have likely doubled to around 400,000.

These figures are important to all of us. They are not statistics that are of interest to statisticians in the Bureau of Census. They are of enormous consequence to us, not only as total figures for 1980; but because of the concept that there is an annual immigration from these countries in Asia ranging well into the 40,000 figure.¹ This constant immigration from these countries in Asia will continue throughout the 1980's. You can measure 150,000 to 200,000 new immigrants from Asia coming in each year throughout the decade. Therefore we are talking about the possibility of 10 years from now of a population of six million Asians, not counting Pacific peoples because that's a different area entirely.²

Most of us are aware of our personal, individual backgrounds, the struggles of our parents and grandparents, the difficulties of Japanese Americans during World War II. We are just beginning to become aware in our communities of the rumblings of concern, racist remarks, disgruntlement because of the inflow, particularly of the new refugee group from Southeast Asia. This is not a problem that we should address only from the refugee perspective because it affects every single individual who is of Asian background. The phenomenon of the refugees added to the already regularized 150,000 new immigrants coming in from Asian countries is a situation which we as Asians must be fully aware of and prepared to deal with in our collective communities. I think this perspective about the Asian community in the United States-the fact that it is a new and fast-growing segment of our population-has to be the first criterion from which we evaluate our situation and develop our strategies and political stances.

Our first problem is that we ourselves are a diverse group. Let's not kid ourselves. We can't say we're Asians; and therefore we are automatically all one people with natural allegiance and loyalty to one another. That is not the reality. The reality is that we come from diverse backgrounds, extremely different cultural, ethnic, religious, and societal perspectives. It is a creation of unity that we are dealing with. It is not a natural unity, and therefore we have to deliberately set about a course of action that will accentuate the commonalities of our backgrounds and our perspectives and of the role that we see for ourselves in this society and to combat together the problems and barriers that we face. Many Asians have struggled so hard to bring themselves up to where they are today. They find it very difficult to relate themselves to this pursuit of Asian Pacific coalition. Therefore we have a very large task. Those of us who deal with Asian Pacific problems on a day-to-day basis know what we're talking about, but many of the Asian Americans who are out there in the professions do not basically relate to the Asian Pacific community. They are wedded to the notion of the bootstrap. They did it; they pulled themselves up; they made it; they got themselves educated; they're responsible for their children; their children are going to make it. They ask: what is the need to relate to one another in terms of expressing a

1. Excluding refugees.

2. Pacific peoples are not immigrants.

group kind of approach towards our collective insights? These Asian Americans, hearing more about Asian Pacific women's organizations, about Asian Pacific educators' organizations, feel threatened. That is the area that each of us in our individual ways must work, not to obliterate, but to ameliorate so that these people will understand that they do have a community responsibility as well as a responsibility for their own families. That is probably the most difficult problem for all of us.

The second problem is self-evident and that is we were born into this country or brought here with a huge baggage on our shoulders called stereotypes. These stereotypes have become encumbrances in the upward progression for ourselves individually as well as for Asian Pacific Americans as a whole. And so as we carry around this baggage of being quiet, self-demeaning, self-effacing, and acquiescent, it's extremely difficult for those who are impatient with that kind of stereotype to really make a stand on public issues without being labelled a radical or a misfit or whatever derogatory name-calling that is attached to individuals who are really seeking out a place for Asian Pacific Americans in terms of their ability to affect state, local, and national policy decisions. We have a very large agenda in that regard. We have to combine efforts. When small groups find a particular incident in one locale offensive, it isn't something to read about or talk about over coffee. It is something to do something about in your communities even though the agitation, the confrontation, is occurring thousands of miles away. That is what is meant by Asian Pacific collaboration. It is not simply sympathy which we relate to one another over a cup of coffee or a cup of tea on social occasions but a concerted determination that we are going to make that other person's agenda across the room our personal agenda as well if it relates to the strategies that are compatible with recognition for Asian Pacific American communities.

We have so many problems that have been documented by HEW, by NIMH, by other governmental agencies that have been spending thousands of dollars studying us. They are written up in reports, statistical analyses. They are extremely interesting. I urge you to avail yourselves of these reports and documents and uncover for yourselves as well as for the people that you deal with the startling realities of the tremendous economic and social disadvantages that Asian Pacific peoples endure in this country. The suicide rate among Asians is three times the national average. Most of our elderly suffer tremendous degrees of isolation, poverty, insufficient housing, lack of nutrition, and inadequate medical care. The startling statistics of the number of Asian elderly who have not been to a doctor in the last ten years will numb your sensibilities. The people who are neglected, the worse neglected, in the city of New York are our Asian people who came to this country many decades ago and helped to forge the kind of life that we are enjoying. This phenomenon occurs in all our communities, on the West Coast, in Hawaii, on the East Coast, in Denver, everywhere. And so to say to ourselves that we've made it is to overlook the many Asians who are denied even a minimal standard of living in this country.

And so we have a great deal to work for. It is difficult for individuals to put aside their individual aspirations, their jobs, their discontent in their workplace, their yearnings for their children. It's extremely difficult to put that all aside and begin to build and deal with a larger and greater society for people for whom one should feel a responsibility. I'm saying to you that that is the meaning of politics. There is no other politics as I can define it. It is not the politics of individual advancement, of individual enhancement, of individual problems in one's school district or business community. Politics is the under-

standing that there is a larger society to which we have a greater responsibility and for which we must work. The only way that I see ourselves being able to achieve that kind of agenda is through an effective national organization.

Of course, we must identify our needs; and I assume that that is one of the purposes of this conference. However, of critical importance is that these needs be translated into actions that we can take at all levels: local, state, and national. Once you arrive at the organization's goals and objectives, then every possible means must be taken to have them translated, communicated, and interpreted to as wide a spectrum of individuals as possible. That is also the political process. You do not meet, convene, resolve, go home and expect by some magical means that the ideas and recommendations generated here are going to permeate the political channels and become realities. It doesn't work that way. You've got to work to achieve those objectives and work through the people who are in government, in appointed or elected positions. Frequently you can accomplish a great deal through the bureaucracy; not everything you want to accomplish has to be done through the electoral process. There are many ways in which you can accomplish things. We have to struggle with a broad kind of agenda. This means taking to your workplaces the meaning of your resolutions as you arrive at them at this kind of conference. It doesn't mean assuming that your national organization is going to have its own momentum, its own identity to act for you. Every individual has to seize the opportunity to advance the objectives of this organization. Over and above everything else, you must identify yourself as a part of this unit, to always say: "I am a member" is extremely important. To come to a conference and then for a whole year never to mention the organization's name does it a great disservice. The fact that you attend is a very rewarding, individual experience; but I'm here to say to you that it has to be something more than that. It has to be a collective identity which you begin to fill. It's not something that the leadership creates for you. It's something which you feel deep down as a personal commitment that you want to carry forward.

I assume that you're going to do this, that this organization is going to have a national identity of significance first and foremost among Asians. They need to know that there is an organization like this that has met, that has identified Asian Pacific priorities in education, that is doing something about them, and that is carrying on a national effort. Likewise we need to extend ourselves as individuals identified with this organization to join other groups. There is no sense in just being a member of this group and saying: "Well, I worked hard for the objectives here." You must join a myriad of other organizations to extend your impact, to make yourselves a known quantity in the community as a champion of NAAPAE objectives and goals so that you have an opportunity to relate to the organization. There's no point in saying: "Yes, I'm always going to identify with this organization" if you have nobody to tell it to. This means that a second step in politics is joining other groups, becoming a focus of impact, concern, and controversy over those issues that you have decided are important for your organization.

I know that there are many hundreds of Asian Pacific groups that have been organized. I have said over and over that I wish a directory of some kind could be developed, a catalogue that would include all our Asian Pacific organizations, naming the leaders, listing addresses, and giving a brief description of goals and objectives. We need to have that kind of national identity. We don't have it now. I can't begin to tell you what organizations exist in Chicago or elsewhere; we don't have a resource bank that we can use in answering requests for nominations for national advisory committees or any other need. We need a

commitment to a national Asian Pacific identity. It would be very simple to establish such a directory; it could be self-financing. There are at least 200,000 Asian Pacific Americans who would like to be listed in such a publication and who would pay an annual five dollar fee to be included. I truly believe that this could happen. A national perspective is what I am working for in all the organizations with which I am affiliated. This is what we need in the 1980's.

Getting back to the idea of somehow transcending the all-pervasive notion of self being the most important concern with which one must live on a day-to day basis, we have to pay attention to the broader perspective of community. For example, there is the current fight to retain the idea that government exists to serve human needs. Asian Pacific Americans, as far as I know, have been virtually invisible in this effort. The only two organizations that have taken a position with respect to their concerns about the national budget being cut by Congress are the JACL and OCA. I think that, more than anything else that I have uncovered, says it all in terms of where we are politically as a group of Asian Pacific Americans.

The organization that I head, Americans for Democratic Action, organized a budget coalition in 1978. About 250 organizations have joined. The fight, of course, has intensified since then. People are paralyzed by sky-rocketing inflation. They don't want to admit that they don't know what to do about it. Consequently they are meat-axing the budget and using the concept of a balanced budget as a scapegoat for the current economic and fiscal crisis. It seems to me that what we have to do is mobilize and join the forces which believe that the overall social and political policies in our country must protect the children, the elderly, the sick, the disadvantaged. We as Asian Pacific Americans must become sensitized to the fact that we cannot exist as an island to ourselves. We have to be concerned with the overall issues that confront this nation. In good times, I'll admit, it is possible to advance separate agendas; but in the hard times which we face now, it's no longer possible to work on a separate concept without damage to everyone.

We must recognize that we are struggling to save a principle of government. Asians have benefitted from this principle but, I doubt, with an adequate awareness of its fragility. Many Asian Pacific American programs have been financed by the federal government, including this organization's first conference. If they go under now as a result of the budget-cutting melee, it would be wrong for us to say that we lost those programs because we did not support them enough. It would be a tragedy to make that kind of rationalization under the current dilemma. What we have to understand is that what is going on is but a condition of the entire governmental picture. The benefits that we derive from government are simply one part of the total effort of government, and it is the total effort of government that is being crippled by those advocating simplistic solutions such as Proposition 13, spending limitations based on percentage of GNP, or constitutional conventions to require a balanced budget. All these are campaigns for straitjackets whose theses must be debunked.

We cannot be effective as Asian Pacific Americans if we only rise to be counted when our programs are being sacrificed or our own ethnic interests are being served. I believe for us to measure our value in society and to have the kind of consistent clout in which politicians come to us, we have got to join that basic struggle for the survival of the principle that government exists to help the people in need. We can make a substantial difference if we look at the broad concept, if we increase our participation in combined

efforts for greater social and economic justice for everyone, if we support policies for a higher standard of living for all, environmental protection, health care, full employment, better work conditions, the obliteration of discrimination, educational equity and world peace. By doing so, we can make certain that no concern which is important to us will ever again be ignored by the people who run this society.

**EDUCATION IN AMERICAN SAMOA:
AN OVERVIEW**

**The Honorable Fofo I. F. Sunia
Delegate to the U.S. Congress
from American Samoa**

When I received the invitation to speak before this very distinguished group, my first reaction was to decline.

It was the kind of reaction my system has been conditioned to make in a situation like this.

You see, I attended school at the time when learning was strictly "R" and "R"--meaning "Rote" and "Rod"!!!

And I still have carryover fears of standing, letting alone speaking, before educators--particularly educated educators like you.

It has become a phobia with me.

I always have the feeling that I am being closely scrutinized at all times; that when I speak, my intonations are closely judged; my subject matter carefully weighed; and my general delivery mercilessly graded...

But I have decided to brace myself and accept the challenge.

Accordingly, I sent for a set of notes and a draft from our Department of Education in Pago Pago.

And I have here the speech the Department has so kindly sent me.

But I will not give it for two very good reasons.

First, it is too well prepared; there is not even one grammatical error in it.

And if I give it--and I am quoted by the media at home, as I will be on this speech--our people will know I did not write it!!!

Second--if I do not fumble and give a perfect presentation, I will sound so learned that people at home will draft me to take charge of the Department of Education...

But those of you who know me and my plans for November, know that the directorship of education is not what I have in mind--simply because it is not housed on Capitol Hill...

While going over my notes, I asked myself several times if I were really an authority on the subject.

Many answers, some most flattering and others not so, flashed through my mind.

But in the end, I said to myself--when one holds a position like the one I now hold, one usually has an assured feeling that one could speak with authority on any subject relating to the place or state one represents--and more so if one is the only official representative...

As a rule, speakers do not come right out and declare themselves experts on the subjects they speak on.

But this speaker will defy practice by saying right out that he is.

You see, I was a student in the system I am here to discuss.

And until last year, I had six children of my own in it.

I chaired PTAs and served in community committees on a variety of educational issues and projects.

And for eight years, I met with the Department of Education in budget hearings as Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee...

Now that I have qualified myself, let me present you with an "overview" of education in American Samoa--from where I sit...

Most, if not all, of you will recall the hot debates in the sixties over the impact of the experiment conducted in American Samoa on the use of television as the medium and core of instruction.

There were sound arguments for and against it.

And I don't want to bore you with the details.

But I want you to know this: Educational television was adopted to meet an urgent educational demand--that is of quickly raising the level of English comprehension of our elementary and secondary students. Along with that was the move to make our people good bilingualists.

TV instructors--or actors as they came to be called by the classroom teachers--were thought to be more effective in achieving this goal much faster to a larger number of students at a cost that was locally manageable.

So we experimented with television, gave it a local flavor, and continually changed the system to meet what we considered at the time as our most urgent education needs...

The society which the immortal Margaret Mead, bless her soul, considered as being "rigid and slow to respond to changes" lived up to the famous anthropologist's claim.

It rejected educational television right from the start...

So, after a few years of experimentation--and of strong public and professional destructive criticisms--we began to play down the importance of the "tube" which has now been relegated to a supplementary role.

The principal's responsibilities as chief administrator and educational leader of the school were accordingly restored.

The classroom teachers who were regarded as expensive manipulators of the volume and color dials of the "tube" were given back their responsibility of "absolute rulers" of the classroom.

Together, the educators have once more become facilitators of learning, organizers of classroom and school activities, coordinators of relations with students and the communities, stimulators of acceptable behavioral patterns, and so on.

And curriculum planners no longer have TV actors to cope with.

TV technicians no longer overrule educators on matters pertaining to presentation.

Since then, the Department of Education has made giant steps in improving the education system--and during the past 10 years of post-tube operations, I am happy to say I feel DOE has succeeded, or, at least, is well on its way towards achieving its goals...

I do not wish to see you leaving here thinking that educational television in American Samoa was a big flop—because it just wasn't so.

Despite Margaret Mead's assessment of our people, we responded relatively well to "tube" education and gave it a chance to prove itself.

In classroom instruction, we found the "tube" an excellent medium for mass education; but not in meeting individual needs.

We found it effective to a certain degree but not to the point where learning becomes more in-depth and analytical...

On community education, our people have come to depend on Cronkite and his colleagues to bring world news to our isolated islands and homes.

Our people fell in love with the Cartrights of Ponderosa and learned about point spreads in NFL games.

Then, of course, they liked seeing the "angels" kick up their heels in paradise even if they belonged to Charlie...

The change back from the "tube" to classroom instruction was not easy.

Being prompted partly by a peaceful revolt by the classroom teachers against an insult to their profession, how can it be easy?

But it has been made, and I can assure you that the change is permanent...

In all fairness, ladies and gentlemen, educational television has helped our people learn English fast.

But it was not exactly college English.

It was, nevertheless, operational.

The impact, as you may surmise from what I am saying, was largely on the social part of our community life...

But we certainly paid a dear price for the level of English our students and people have learned from the "tube."

One of the casualties was our teacher training program.

Nobody quite knew how to train teachers for television classrooms.

Individualized instruction was completely neglected.

Sure, there was a lot of English on the "air"; but it was directed at everybody, and not at the individual student.

Technicians got a bigger say in the matter of education than trained educators...

There are about 10,000 pupils in the American Samoa public school system.

There are four high schools, 24 elementary schools, ECE schools and Special Education.

Our Department of Education takes special pride in its ECE program which is highly rated nationally.

Schooling is a constitutional requirement, up to the age of 18.

Like all the states and other U.S. territories, American Samoa has a variety of federally funded programs within its educational system.

Our Department of Education is directed by a Samoan, Mrs. Mere Betham.

Her assistants are Samoans...

To support elementary and secondary education, the Department of Education re-organized and strengthened its curriculum development division which is directed by a Samoan.

Feedback from the schools regarding the effectiveness of the curriculum go directly to the division which investigates said feedback and, if necessary, devises appropriate adjustments.

I am told the division also devises methods by which certain subjects are taught...

On the question of cost, about twenty percent of the total government budget next year is earmarked for the Department of Education.

This represents the biggest allocation given to any government department or agency...

Now, let us take a look at the product all these efforts have produced.

I have for years spoken in many graduation ceremonies and other educational gatherings.

And I used to be very proud in saying, "The greatest testimony to the success of education in American Samoa is the fact that I am standing before you today speaking beautiful English, holding an important position in the Legislature, and possessing all vital information about our government operations."

Then I would proudly tell them about Mrs. Mere Betham and how she used to be one of my high school teachers.

I honestly thought this was a good line until someone who knows and likes me well pointed out that the director was not at all pleased with what I have said.

In the first place, it dated her; and in the second place, not everyone agreed that I am well educated--and the director did not wish to be held responsible...

I realize the question of testing an educational product--the student--is very sensitive.

But the student--like any other product of a system--must be tested before it is allowed into the open market...

You have no doubt heard reports saying that the English skills of the average American Samoa high school graduate are equivalent to that of a California seventh grader.

True or not, I do not intend to debate the matter.

I wish, however, to point out the dilemma we face.

Every state and territory in the Union is working hard to improve its own education system.

Accordingly, as California and American Samoa work to improve their systems, they move ahead at about the same rate.

Hard as we may try to catch up, we seem to be just standing still.

Simple logic--everyone is moving ahead and improving--so hardly any one catches up with another.

It is a fact, however, that the high school graduate of American Samoa today possesses more useful information and skills than I did when I graduated from the same system some years ago...

I said earlier that the director of education is a Samoan--so are her assistants and a host of other officials in our government today: the college president, budget officer, directors of economic development, communications, agriculture, marine resources, energy office, port administration, and so on.

These and others like them are products of the system we are discussing.

While I do not have the time to discuss the quality of their services, I am pretty sure I can safely say we are pretty well satisfied with their work.

But like all other such cases anywhere in the world, there is always room for improvement...

Now let me just give you a quick glance at what the future has in store for us...

The eighties are going to be a continuation of the seventies.

Continual rebuilding and improvement will always be the order of the day.

We expect the Department of Education to work closer with the community in revamping its programs to effectively and efficiently meet the professed needs of the community.

It will continue to develop the individual student so he or she can safely realize his or her full potential.

It will also be very mindful of changes within the island community, the nation and the world...

But American Samoa is a community which still clings to age-old traditions which now face an onslaught of modern trends.

Here too, the Department of Education has another big challenge--and we expect it to rise to the occasion...

The Department of Education recognizes the need to improve its teacher training program to meet the changing and growing needs of the community.

It also recognizes the challenge of providing marketable skills for those American Samoans who migrate to Hawaii and the mainland USA...

But having a fine-tuned system geared at meeting all the needs of a community and individuals is only part of the story.

We need trained people who care about American Samoa and its future, to man the system.

We need the support of political leaders who recognize the needs, goals and objectives of the system and provide whatever is needed to achieve them.

We need leaders who are convinced that a person has to go through in-depth, extensive and continual training to become an educator and that providing him or her with a salary below that of a mailman is not only most unfair but downright insulting...

As one of American Samoa's political leaders, I would welcome interaction with our educators and their participation in the decision-making process.

Often times, we legislate with our hearts--and that is admirable.

But what we need are your heads to be placed next to our hearts.

That is a Polynesian proverb with my special English translation...

As Pacific islanders, we are members of a special community which is becoming recognized both by our nation and by the world.

We are benefactors of many programs resulting from trial and error experimentation conducted here in the U.S. mainland.

I call on you to unite in protesting the indiscriminate requirements of several programs, the dropping of us without notice from certain programs, as well as some of the senseless excesses we see.

We are proud to be part of the Pacific.

And we are proud to be here with you today.

Soifua.

**CRITICAL EDUCATIONAL ISSUES CONCERNING
THE ASIAN/PACIFIC AMERICANS**

**Allan L. Seid, M.D.
Member
California State Board of Education**

For us as Asian Pacific American (APA) educators and as a people, the 1980s hold forth both great challenges and great opportunities for significant advancement in the quality of socialization of our children and re-education of ourselves.

The 1980s is a challenging time because there is across our land, frightening economic uncertainties which grow and persist; the deadly duo of inflation and recession strain pursestrings and psyches; promoting mistrust, insecurity, and an "each-man-for-himself" mentality. Students of American history know that economic hard times are accompanied by increased widespread anti-minority sentiments and actions. Specifically, there has been increasing erosion of civil rights - a returning of the mentality of "America for White Americans," and "America - love it or leave it," a resurgence of assimilationist ideology, and intolerance of diversity, a diminished sense of urgency and commitment to affirmative action programs, and increased ethnic isolation on and off the campuses.

In addition, the relative success of a few of our people has bred complacency in some and smothered their zeal for continued progressive social changes.

Yet, there are opportunities never before present for us to seize and use. There has never been in the history of our country as many established, active and vocal, national, state, and local APA organizations devoted to the advancement of our people.

Moreover, there is a startling new phenomenon never before present in our nation: the breakdown of the Anglo-American Protestant tradition of superiority. It is evidenced by the groundswell of questioning of heretofore hallowed established institutions and basic American ideals. The shackles of unequivocal conformity and the iron grip of coercive uniformity to White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) ethics, ideals, and ideologies have loosened and there is finally some genuine liberty for self-definition and self-determination among people of color.

It is within this mixed environmental context that the great educational challenges for us as APA educators and as a people are to be met and conquered.

The greatest educational issues are the challenges to define ourselves as a people and to determine for ourselves our unique ideals, goals, and to establish a coherent and unifying national APA educational agenda that emanates from and is grounded in that definition of our collective identity.

Thomas Szasz has written: "In the animal kingdom it is kill or be killed, in the human kingdom it is define or be defined."

The capacity for a people to define themselves and to be self-determining is inseparably linked to their sense of ethnic pride and solidarity. To deny a people the right to be self-determining is the cruelest of oppressions. It subverts their humanity; it destroys their dignity; it deepens their dependency. When we as a people have lost the power to affect the manner of our existence, when we are forced to live under the constraints even of a benign paternalism, we are threatened both with the loss of our past and the possibilities of a future. Self-definition and self-determination, then, are prerequisites for a people's pride in and preservation of their heritage. By exercising our right to define ourselves and to be self-determining we can affirm our past, celebrate the present, and prepare for the future.

A primary function of schooling is socialization, whether the school is viewed from the perspective of the society, the community, the parents, or the child; and the primary question underlying the present malaise in education is socialization towards what?

Anglo-American Protestants had their answer - all were to be socialized and assimilated into their traditions, ideologies, values, and perspective on life - all were to be melted together into their likenesses! The definition for human conduct and values, then, was the WASP definition, imposed upon all others from without, with little allowance for cultural subtleties and ideological differences. It was a stern definition wherein disagreement was considered rebellion, variances considered aberration, and difference, at the very least, became embarrassment and shame.

The main fuel for the American melting pot was "SHAME." The APA immigrants and APAs of even 7th generation Americans were best instructed in how to repulse themselves; millions of our people were taught to be ashamed of their own faces, their language, their their family names, their parents and grandparents, and their class patterns, histories, and

life outlooks. This shame had incredible power to make us learn, especially when coupled with "hope," the other main energy source for the melting pot – hope about becoming modern, about being secure, about becoming successful, about escaping the wars and depressions of the old country, and about being equal with the Anglo-Americans. Indeed, shame and hope employed in the context of comparison with something better were effective educational techniques and socializing tools. The scars – manifested in lives unfilled, dreams suppressed, potentials undeveloped, leaders lost, people living zombie-like in the face of oppression and injustice – amply testify to the pervasive success of WASP-controlled schools.

Viewed in this perspective we may better understand the reasons why so many of us, immigrants or 7th generation APAs, learned so fast – but learned to feel and behave as second class citizens; why we and our antecedents asked so few questions in the process of socialization; and why so few APAs or other ethnics of color have risen to true prominence.

However, the use of shame and hope as controlling devices is only operative when the dominant culture is deemed the "better life," the "American dream," attainable and desirable. But now it is evident to millions that American modernity, security, and equality are not what they might have been. Among the major achievements of our time, the shocks and the failures also must be included. Increasingly, there are fewer reasons for APAs and even for poor, working-class and middle-class white Americans, to look to elite values and feel either shameful about their own traditions or hopeful about the prospects of assimilating into the American mainstream.

Even if we dislike or lack some of our own traditions, we have trouble enthusiastically imitating this great elite; we might as well seek new directions. Millions are no longer willing to sacrifice their own history, aspirations, ideas, memories, sentiments, and social and cultural styles—or to mistake manners for morals—for the sake of the Anglo-American tradition. The shame and hope still exist in some degree, of course, but they will never have the same force in the American socialization process. And indeed, now that the decline of Anglo-American leadership and ideals has produced significant skepticism, it is predictable that such shame will continue to decline, that *self-respect* will become a new force, and that hope will take different and more pluralistic forms.

We must overturn the traditions that have limited our capacity to hope and to become. We can create alternative belief systems that are founded on a long, rich, and vibrant history of struggles and triumphs both in our motherland and on the soil of America. New traditions and ideologies derived from our unique Asian/Pacific American Culture and Experiences are to be our guidelines and framework for educational policies, regulations, programs, instructional processes, curriculum, research, teachers training, community involvement, and indeed, the total socialization endeavors for each new generation of our children.

There are some paradoxes that must be considered in proceeding toward a new collective identity. Insofar as the past and present are the way to the future, we must know who we were and who we are to know what we can become—realities always temper vision. But before we can really say who we were or who we are, we must decide what it is we want to be—vision always modifies reality.

Paradoxically, the more extensive our knowledge of what has been done, the greater will be our power of knowing what to do; the farther forward we are likely to see. Indeed, then we who wish to know what shall be, must consider what has been.

Yet though we wish to preserve the fire of the past—the past is for inspiration, not imitation; for continuation, not repetition. Our past is our heritage—our present is our responsibility—our future is our destiny. We honor best our fathers and mothers—not by going back to the place where they stopped, but by going forward to the things their vision foresaw.

Hence, in our search for authentic collective identity we must move beyond the parameters of the APA community—the community here in America. Identity sought *only* in this land, on these shores, in the midst of the mind-purging institutions and whitening factories of America is insufficient and doomed to failure. Seekers so limited will find no soul satisfying answers—for the answers will merely be those imposed by WASP traditions dominating this land.

There can be no identity without the spirit and roots of the motherland. In this affirmation of beginnings, there is also an Asian/Pacific sense of timelessness, a sense of the continuity of our life with that of our ancestors and the unborn children. There is a solid sense of confidence, in the midst of all the middle passages of our beings, that our spirit will endure and prevail, linked as we are with the spirits of our homeland. Knowledge of the history of our ancestral homelands and of the experiences of our pioneering forebearers to America are critical in the search.

Collective identity of a people is *not* easy to achieve—for as we look at our past and present, we must envision the future. If a APA says, "When I know who I am, then I'll be free", the question must follow, free for what? And the answers pour forth like a flood:

free for the struggles toward authentic, self-determining life

free to vindicate the lives of the ancestors whom we now affirm

free to build a new world beyond such oppression as our grandparents and parents suffered

free to build a new life for the children.

That is the burden and the privilege of true identity among the oppressed. It is never private (although it is personal) and cannot ultimately be found in deeply subjective trips into the castles of our skin. This is a Western understanding of identity. Rather, ours must be found in the context of the APA community—past, present, and future—in the community of the oppressed and their cause. That is why the school system of the dominating society does not really encourage authentic minority or APA identity. Instead they teach that the pathway to truly humane identity is through some white-painted "universalism," an amorphous fog which effectively separates us from the struggles of our fathers and the cries of our children for life.

Authentic identity is no mere "cultural" or "spiritual" identity. Authentic identity is about struggle for integrity and multi-leveled freedom. It is about a drastic uprooting and

re-orientation of deep-seated institutional and individual values. It is a deep concern over the ultimate liberation of all Asian/Pacific lands itself. Above all it is about the struggle to "release our minds from borrowed white hells." In its most profoundly political sense, it is about release from essential identification with the goals and purposes of "WASP American."

When we know who we are, then we shall be free. And, conversely, we shall know who we are and what we are for—when we are free. This is the ultimate ramification of identity: the freedom to be and to do what we are for—the sense of vocation in the deepest, religious meaning of that word. To understand who we are, then is to understand our "calling."

In the struggle toward identity, that "calling" comes not simply through the apprehension of some voice from the world of the invisible, but it is wrested out of a growing recognition of who our fathers and our children are, who we are, and what is the reality of the enemy systems which have been used against them and against us. By now, I hope, it is clear that the latter reality is focused in all the socializing and controlling institutions and hells which have taken from major segments of APA people any full sense of identity and therefore any hope for freedom. It also should be clear that creators of these institutions are not really planning to provide new institutions to encourage that "beauty full of healing" which our lives so badly need.

Therefore, our calling now is to reform institutions that are alterable or create new ones even while we struggle against the powers of the old. Our release will not come without such struggles and such building. Our identity and our calling will continue to be manufactured under white (WASP) control until, as Langston Hughes said, "we learn how to bake" and learn how to secure the products of our creation.

WASP institutions, WASP hells, WASP systems of domination—these are the enemies of our fathers and our children. The search for identity in the APA community leads inexorably to such conclusions. That is the meaning of the poem:

Speak the Truth to the people

To identify the enemy is to free the mind

Free the mind of the people

Speak to the mind of the people

Speak truth.

All of this building is cultural, all of it is political, all of it is educational, all of it is necessarily economic, and the spiritual suffuses its entire being. All of it grows out of a sense of authentic identity which frees the mind. For those who would take the risk of developing APA children with minds free to live and die for their people and community, the institutions we create (within and outside the white systems) must begin with that community. They must be institutions which immerse themselves in an understanding of the community, which legitimize its healthy manifestations and clarify the sources of its sickness. The roots of the community here and beyond the seas must be explored and understood. Both then,

Asian/Pacific and Asian/Pacific *American* histories, cultures and heroes must be researched, studied, and used for inspiration.

All teaching ultimately must flow out of the resources, the needs, the spirit of the ancestral community, returning what has been created by the fathers into the lives of the children, helping them to provide what is not yet present for the good of the whole. Both are necessary, but the attitudes and frames of mind must come out of the best creations of the APA community, and only those who are ready to know and learn and affirm that community are ready to teach our children, are ready to build new institutions for our children.

No APA people can believe in pluralism without believing in APA people. When this belief becomes pre-eminent then those who now work within the present systems and who seek to build anew for our people must perforce, circumvent and subvert the goals and purposes of white institutionalized racism.

Seeking constantly for whole truths and not half-lies and historical misrepresentations, the new creator-builders must introduce into their classroom and school districts all the Asian Pacific American texts and supplementary materials available. They must use the resources—human, artistic, and institutional—of the APA's and other minority communities as basic curriculum, considering all else suspect and occasionally necessary evils at best. Specifically, this means utilizing the time, talents, energy and creativity of parent and non-parent adults, the elderly, the students—the total human resources of the APA community. It means each APA man and woman, young and old is to be counted as a potential social change agent. It means intensive and extensive networking and sustaining communication between APA organizations whether they be political or advocacy groups; cultural, artistic, social or educational associations; business or professional societies. Individuals and collective units in diverse fields at the local, regional, or national level must be mobilized to act in concert as a "people" supporting and nurturing one another's more specialized objectives within the context of each others mutual/common broader agenda as a united distinct people...a distinct people unified by a collective identity—characterized more by commonalities born out of years of battles with an oppressive dominant society than differences—and solidified by a common perspective and self-determined ideologies and goals. Nothing short of this total mobilization of a heretofore fragmented, other-defined but now cohesive self-defined people will bring about significant beneficial change in the educational institution.

The task is an especially difficult one for classroom teachers, site and district administrators: while teaching children how to pass the tests of a dominant culture, one must create a new self-affirming spirit within the students which will lead step-by-step to the breaking of the power of domination.

While some of us must build outside the immediate physical presence of the prevailing white systems, most others must struggle from within—but struggle with a sense of identity, purpose, and direction—always turned toward the needs of our people to overcome the systems of oppression.

All educators will become members of a new politico-religious force, dedicated to the release of every APA mind from "borrowed white hells." Educators will stimulate their students to challenge the forces which define our lives for us and provide the strength and

wisdom necessary to define our identities. Educators will find their own identity and thereby find their own dangerous-but glorious-calling.

Chances must be taken, insistent voices must be heard; organizing must be done, hands and hearts joined, before pluralism will be born. Battles between APA's must be replaced by mutual nurturance and active support. Coalitions with other oppressed ethnics of color must be forged. There can be no real identity achieved on personal or communal levels without these movements. Release cannot come without hard, persistent, organized struggle. Institutions do not give up their domain without struggle. But unless that release comes, and unless new humane systems of life and growth are developed, the identity of no person will be secured, and we will become, not people without countries, but people without souls.

This is the ultimate ramification of identity for the APA community--and I suspect, for all the communities of the white-ravaged ethnics of color in our nation. We discover who we are and thereby discover what we are for.

We are for a new and more humane society--with institutions grounded on the value of cultural diversity as a precious natural/human resource and asset to be cherished.

We are for the prevailing spirit represented more by pluralism, multicultural/multilingualism than by monolithic, monolingual Eurocentrism.

To know who we are is to begin to move toward our real work, our real calling.

The challenge and opportunity to define ourselves, to determine our common unifying agenda, and to march forward united--with vigor, pride and dignity--for a life and death battle

to vindicate our forebearers

to release ourselves

and to free our children

these are the critical issues facing us as a people and as APA educators.

Thank you.

EFFECTS OF RESEARCH ON POLICYMAKING

Gladys Chang Keith Hardy
Deputy Director
National Institute of Education

For many cynical educators, in Washington and Elsewhere, a talk about the relationship between research and policymaking should be very brief – if it should be given at all. A letter from a constituent, for example, pressure from a powerful lobbyist, or a personal interest in a particular problem are more important, many cynics would say, than the results of any carefully designed research project – unless that project indicated whether support would win or lose votes.

More idealistic educators might agree that the talk would be brief, but for somewhat different reasons. These idealists might point out that major federal initiatives in education – the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Vocational Education Act, the Higher Education Amendments – were based not on research, but on faith – faith that America through education can overcome the inequities that plague our society – faith that America cared about the poor, the uneducated – faith that America would promote social justice for minorities. For these idealists, it may indeed be well that the faith of the policymakers was not limited by research findings.

Caring too much about education to be a cynic, but having too much experience to be an idealist, I do believe there is a strong, though often indirect relationship between

research and education policymaking. Unfortunately for those cynics and idealists present who may have hoped for a brief talk, there is so much to say that we could be here for a long time.

To stay within my allotted time, I will limit my comments to four general questions. What types of policies should our research support? What policymakers can we influence? At what point in the policymaking process can our research be used? And finally, how can we improve the chances that our research will influence policy?

In authorizing NIE, Congress clearly mandated that the Institute conduct research that would help improve educational practice and increase equal educational opportunity. Practice is broadly conceived to include everything from the setting of educational policy and the structuring of school finance to effective classroom methods. The concern for equity is equally encompassing. The Institute supports research that seeks to identify barriers to equal educational opportunity and strategies for overcoming those barriers.

The Institute recognizes that members of certain groups identifiable by such characteristics as race, national origin, color or sex face particular problems. Our strategy has NOT been to establish research areas focusing on the needs of particular groups - Black, Hispanic or Asian American. Our overall goal, rather, has been to provide a research base for policies that will systematically reduce barriers for all groups so that this nation may have the full benefits of a pluralistic society.

In developing this research base, the Institute is interested in: (1) analyzing existing policies to determine if they are helping to improve practice or reduce inequity; (2) identifying the need for new policies; and (3) evaluating or identifying more effective implementation and administrative procedures.

One of the best known of the Institute's projects was the Compensatory Education Study mandated by Congress in 1974 and completed in 1978. The study was designed to help Congress in its deliberations about the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The study found that Title I accomplishes the purposes intended by Congress in that it allocates funds to low-achieving students in poor schools, that school districts use the funds to provide supplementary services to these children and that well planned, stable programs can raise student achievement.

It is of utmost importance to note that the study was NOT designed to decide how funds should be allocated or how schools should deliver services. These are political decisions to be made by Congress or by local policymakers who must take into account a myriad of factors other than research. It is perhaps because the managers of this project knew both the power and the limits of research that many members of Congress and their staff refer to this study as an exemplary model of policy research.

The Congressionally mandated School Finance Study, housed in NIE, is concerned not so much with evaluating existing policy, as it is in identifying areas where new policies may be needed. The legislation authorizing the study calls for reliable and comparative data on school finance, an analysis of the problems and prospects for school finance over the next ten years, and for recommendations for Federal policies to improve the equity and efficiency of school finance systems.

With both basic and applied research, NIE has for several years concentrated on the process of school improvement with considerable emphasis on the performance of Federal categorical programs. One proposed implementation study will look at how the various categorical requirements influence what a teacher does in the classroom. One of the questions to be asked is do the studies increase or reduce the actual amount of time devoted to teaching? A second study will look at the problems and advantages that rural school districts have in implementing the Education for all Handicapped Children Act. Both of these studies will help policymakers understand both the intended and unintended effects of legislation designed to increase equal educational opportunity.

Our research, then, can help identify policies needed to overcome inequity or improve practice or indicate more effective implementation strategies.

The second question I wish to address is what policymakers can we seek to influence? Policy is made at the national, state and local level by legislative and administrative bodies. It would be naive to believe that a given piece of research has the potential to influence all or even several of these various actors. The types of policy decisions that Congress can make — authorization and appropriation of funds — are significantly different than those a local superintendent makes — staffing and selection of materials, for example. Consequently, research and information needs are fundamentally different.

For information to be useful to policymakers it must provide them with data about decisions they can make and in a form they can use. If research is to be policy-relevant, the policymaker must be viewed as the client.

Some of our policy studies have Congress as the client. The Congressionally mandated Vocational Education Study, for example, is designed to provide information, data, analysis and insights bearing directly upon the reauthorization of Federal vocational education legislation. Does the program as it is currently authorized and implemented direct funds to minority and poor youth? Do the funds stimulate local or state spending? These are some of the questions that Congress must have answered if they are to authorize legislation that will enhance equity.

The Desegregation Studies Team has supported research that helps federal administrators review desegregation plans submitted by school districts, particularly educationally effective components.

In authorizing NIE, Congress explicitly acknowledged that education remains primarily a local function. It is at the local level that the most crucial, the most difficult decisions must be made. Many of the research projects at NIE are designed to provide research for use by local and state educators.

One of the most vexing decisions facing a school principal is how to handle a dangerous or disruptive student in such a way that a learning environment is maintained, but the rights of the student are respected. To help the local officials, NIE sponsored a National Conference on In-School Alternatives to Suspension. The conference proceedings have been widely disseminated.

To help urban superintendents, our Dissemination and Improvement of Practice Program has established an Urban Superintendent's Network. The network helps urban

superintendents exchange research-based information and identify priority areas where more research is needed.

NIE has sought to help state policymakers primarily in the area of school finance. Two publications have had wide dissemination — *Plain Talk about School Finance* and *Alternative Measures of School District Wealth*. Each of these publications were developed with the continuing advice of the policymakers. In addition to the publications, the Institute supported workshops and technical assistance services to state education and legislative officials.

Another level of policymaker is the college administrator. NIE has begun a new initiative in postsecondary education on the advice of a distinguished advisory board of researchers and practitioners. The Institute will support research aimed at understanding the organizational processes that occur in postsecondary institutions and the effects of these processes on minority enrollment and retention, faculty career paths and the quality of instruction. The research should help administrators and managers make more effective and equitable decisions.

In summary, our research may be of use to the full spectrum of educational decision-makers if the "client" is known from the beginning, is involved in the research design and receives the information in an appropriate form.

The third question to be addressed today is at what point in the policymaking process can our research be used. Denis Mitchell, in a report supported by the Legal and Governmental Studies Group at NIE, suggests that there are three stages in policy decision making: Articulation, Aggregation and Allocation.

Articulation is the process by which issues are defined or identified and articulated into different legislative proposals.

Aggregation consists of the bargaining and cajoling process during which various interest groups and constituents lobby for their ideas.

At the allocation stage decisions are made about where resources will be placed.

In the December issue of *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, David Florio and his co-authors state that research is most used in articulation, second in aggregation and has the least influence at the decision-making stage.

Much of the research at NIE is directed at the articulation stage of policymaking. I will discuss two examples. Sensing a growing interest in the relationship between the family and education, NIE established two teams to support research in the area. It is known that the family influences the educational experiences and accomplishments of children, but much less is known about how schools and other public agencies should interact with the families. In seeking to define the issues, the teams will ask questions such as "Given the increase in the number of working mothers, what new services should schools offer? Should schools provide after school care? Should they have family counseling services? What type of fund, if any, should the federal government provide?"

The second area is youth employment. Staff from NIE have worked closely with members of the Education Department and the White House Staff throughout the development of the President's Youth Initiative. Two teams at the Institute are sponsoring work on youth and employment. There is no question that unemployment, particularly among minorities and the young, is a staggering problem whose costs must be measured in terms of shattered dreams, wasted lives and various forms of anti-social behavior. What is less known is what education in general and schools in particular can do. Who should be eligible for services? How should they be delivered? What types of services are needed? Again, NIE's work helps policymakers shape the issues and the potential legislation.

At the next stage of policymaking -- the aggregation level, the questions most likely to be asked are how a particular piece of legislation will affect a particular district or a particular group of people. NIE's work in school finance has been a help to state policymakers as they weigh alternative school finance proposals. For example, NIE supported research on different definitions of equity in school finance and how these definitions, if enacted into law, would have different effects.

Again, it must be kept in mind that it is not the mission or the purpose of the Institute, or research in general, to tell policymakers or practitioners how to act, but to help them understand the consequences of their actions. Consequently, it is not at all surprising or dismaying to know that at the moment of decision -- at the moment votes are counted -- research seems to have little direct effect.

The final question -- the question of how to increase the influence of research on policymaking -- is perhaps the most important. No matter how well designed our research, no matter how tuned in to the particular stage of policymaking, unless our findings are communicated or disseminated in ways that are meaningful to the policymakers, our research will be in vain.

There is, unfortunately, evidence that the research community has not been successful in communicating with policymakers. In a recent survey of staff members of Congress on groups that influence them, researchers were placed ninth in a list of twelve -- just below that of the Office of Management and Budget and the White House Staff, but a little more important than the popular press.

The same survey did indicate that some steps would be helpful. Research must be timely. Where possible, policymakers should help define the research questions. Researchers should be available for unofficial personal communication and for expert testimony. In summary, the policymakers must be the client.

But, in the end, there are and will always be, severe limits on what the Institute or researchers can do to directly influence policy. It is primarily when policymakers, at whatever level, believe that the public is concerned that changes be made, that those changes are likely to occur. That same survey of Congressional staff indicated that while researchers were suspect and government officials somewhat unreliable, local education officials and representatives of professional education groups were considered very important and very influential.

Therefore, in some ways, my last question is really a challenge to you: to design and conduct research that can support policies that will enhance equity, to communicate the need for such policies to the decisionmakers and to explain to them the research base, to lobby for more equitable education policy. Thank you.

**INFLUENCING THE POLITICAL PROCESS:
IT'S A TWO PART STORY**

**The Honorable Norman Y. Mineta
Member, U.S. House of Representatives**

Thank you for inviting me to be your keynote speaker this evening. I am very pleased that educators from across the country are aware of the special educational needs of Asian and Pacific American students, and I congratulate you for the effort that has gone into this second annual conference.

I'd like to spend a few minutes this evening discussing the current political climate in Washington, how it will affect programs you are interested in, and ways you can influence the direction of these programs in the future.

"Balance the Budget Fever" has spread across the country, and those of us on the House Budget Committee, have been working very hard to produce a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 1981. If we succeed, and I am confident that we will, it will be the first time in twelve years that we have had a balanced federal budget.

The budget is particularly important to those of us who are concerned about minorities and programs that enable them to improve their quality of life. Because of the balanced budget climate, we in Congress are concentrating on more intensive review of the programs that are already in existence. We are looking to make sure they are meeting their intended

goals. We are looking to eliminate duplication of effort. And, we are looking to be sure that a program is still needed or whether it has outgrown its usefulness. In short, we are paying more attention to ensuring that the programs we now have are working better, rather than creating new programs.

However, I am sure that many of you are concerned about how reductions in the budget will affect education in general, and programs dealing with Asian and Pacific Americans in particular. Let me give you some insight into how the budget process works.

The Budget Committee, on which I serve, sets the spending targets and ceilings for every function in the budget. Within these ceilings, we make recommendations to the Appropriations Committee on how they might live within the figures we set, but the Appropriations Committee is not bound by these recommendations. It is only bound by the ceiling set in the resolution.

In order to receive an appropriation, a program must first be authorized, and programs are periodically reauthorized as well. It is during this process in the authorization Committees that we have been concentrating on making the programs we have work better.

In the case of education, you all know that last year the Congress passed legislation creating a new Department of Education. This was part of the President's reorganization effort, and one I was pleased to support. We had found that education programs were scattered throughout more than 20 federal agencies, making effective administration nearly impossible.

In creating the new department, we brought under one umbrella most of the education programs being conducted by the federal government. In this way, we hope to eliminate duplication, streamline administration, and give education the attention that we all agree it rightly deserves. The Department of Education should, therefore, be an agency to which you pay special attention.

For example, the reorganization of education programs is going on right now as part of the transition to the new Department. We should all be concerned about where the Minority Concerns Office, which includes an Asian Concerns desk, is placed in the bureaucracy.

As you all know, once authorizing legislation and the appropriations for it are passed, it is up to the federal agencies and departments to administer and implement it. They write the regulations that must be followed by those at the federal, state, and local levels. In these budget cutting times, your attention should focus on this part of the process to ensure that educational programs are administered to meet the needs of Asian and Pacific Americans.

Let me give you an example, though outside the area of education. The Small Business Administration has a minority set aside program which directs some government projects to minority small business. This program began in 1968. In revisions to the program, Asian and Pacific Americans were not specifically designated as eligible, though we could qualify as "other minority." By working with the SBA and finally by introducing an amendment to SBA legislation on the floor of the House, I was able to ensure that Asian and Pacific Americans, as a group, would be designated as a "socially and economically disadvantaged group" eligible for this program.

My point is this: rather than looking to create new programs through the Congress, we must instead concentrate our efforts on ensuring that the programs already in existence pay particular attention to the needs of Asian and Pacific Americans. This means keeping a close eye on what the Department of Education does, and how it affects Asian and Pacific Americans. This means keeping a close eye on what the Department of Education does, and how it affects Asian and Pacific Americans. We have become a much more vocal and visible voice, and we all know that "the squeaky wheel gets the grease."

As the pie of federal dollars stabilizes and shrinks, instead of looking for ways to increase the size of the pie, we have to be sure that we get our fair share of what is available. This means making those in government aware of what our needs are and not letting others overlook us. As people interested in the educational concerns of Asian and Pacific Americans, we have to be diligent, both at the Congressional level and within the federal bureaucracy, in keeping a watchful eye on how programs are administered and implemented.

It is not an easy task, but, a necessary one, nonetheless. We have to be aware that what goes on in Congress with regards to programs is only part of the story. The other part is what goes on within the agencies. I have been particularly concerned that we encourage the federal agencies to recruit and hire qualified Asian and Pacific Americans, not only because it is important from an affirmative action standpoint, but also because we need people administering these programs who are sensitive to the needs and concerns of Asian and Pacific Americans.

As educators, you recognize the difficult task before you. We are facing a time when the public claims to want quality education for its youth but is unwilling to approve bond issues or other measures on the local level to provide financing for the improvements they demand. We are facing times when parents, local school boards, and educators themselves cannot agree on what the priorities should be in educating our youth.

We are facing times when local jurisdictions are looking to the federal government for assistance in funding many education programs -- such as the bilingual education program, assistance for refugees, aid for educating the handicapped, and many others. At the same time, local school districts are becoming increasingly frustrated by the bureaucratic requirements that sometimes accompany these federal monies.

So, let me stress that before getting involved in the legislative and political process, you must determine what your priorities are. This is especially important as the competition for funds becomes even more intense. If your priorities focus on programs at the federal level, you need to voice these concerns to your Members of Congress and to the appropriate Committees. You will need to pay close attention to how federal agencies administer programs, you will need to keep a watchful eye on the regulations agencies propose, and you will need to determine how they affect, exclude, or deal with the needs of Asian and Pacific Americans.

By working together, all of you with each other and all of you with those of us in Congress who share your concerns, we can have an effect.

Since becoming involved in government, I have found that there are three types of people: those who make things happen, those who watch things happen, and those who wonder what happened. By your presence at this conference, it is clear you are part of that group that makes things happen.